

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-14 and 16-17 have been amended, claim 15 has been canceled and claims 18-38 have been added as follows:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method for fermentation and culture ~~characterized in that comprising fermenting~~ a material derived from an edible plant ~~was fermented by~~ and containing a glucide whose major component is a polysaccharide with a facultative anaerobic gram-negative bacterium which lives in a symbiotic relationship exclusively with a plant and simultaneously culturing said facultative anaerobic gram-negative bacterium ~~is cultured~~.

Claim 2 (currently amended): The method for fermentation and culture according to claim 1 ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said material is exclusively edible.

Claim 3 (currently amended): The method for fermentation and culture according to claim 1 ~~or 2 characterized in that~~ wherein starch is fermented as a carbon source.

Claim 4 (currently amended): The method for fermentation and culture according to ~~any of claims 1 to 3 characterized in that~~ claim 1 wherein said facultative anaerobic gram-negative bacterium is bacillus.

Claim 5 (currently amended): The method for fermentation and culture according to claim 4 ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said facultative anaerobic bacillus belongs to the family *Enterobacteriaceae*.

Claim 6 (currently amended): The method for fermentation and culture according to claim 4 ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said facultative anaerobic bacillus belongs to the genus *Pantoea*, *Serratia* or *Enterobacter*.

Claim 7 (currently amended): The method for fermentation and culture according to claim 4 ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said facultative anaerobic bacillus is *Pantoea agglomerans*.

Claim 8 (currently amended): The method for fermentation and culture according to ~~any of claims 1 to 7 characterized in that~~ claim 1 wherein said edible plant is selected from a food grain, seaweed or a bean, ~~[[or]]~~ and a mixture thereof.

Claim 9 (currently amended): The method for fermentation and culture according to claim 8 ~~characterized in that a~~ wherein said edible plant is a food grain and said material derived from ~~[[said]]~~ food grain is selected from wheat flour, rice powder, wheat bran powder, rice bran ~~[[or]]~~ and sake lees.

Claim 10 (currently amended): The method for fermentation and culture according to claim 8 ~~characterized in that a~~ wherein said edible plant is seaweed and said material derived from ~~[[said]]~~ seaweed is selected from brown seaweed powder, mekabu powder ~~[[or]]~~ and kelp powder.

Claim 11 (currently amended): The method for fermentation and culture according to claim 8 ~~characterized in that a~~ wherein said edible plant is a bean and said material derived from ~~[[said]]~~ bean is a bean curd refuse.

Claim 12 (currently amended:) A fermented plant extract ~~characterized by being~~ obtained by the method for fermentation and culture according to ~~any of claims 1 to 11~~ claim 1.

Claim 13 (currently amended): Fermented plant extract powder ~~characterized by being~~ obtained from the fermented plant extract according to claim 12.

Claim 14 (currently amended): A ~~fermented plant extract~~ pharmaceutical composition characterized in that containing the fermented plant extract according to claim 12 ~~or the fermented plant extract powder according to claim 13 is contained.~~

Claim 15 (cancelled)

Claim 16 (currently amended): The fermented plant extract according to claim 12 ~~characterized by exhibiting~~ exhibits physicochemical properties which are an ability of macrophage activation even with the presence of polymyxin B.

Claim 17 (currently amended): The fermented plant extract according to claim 12 ~~characterized by having~~ which has an immunopotential activity.

Claim 18 (new): A food containing the fermented plant extract according to claim 12.

Claim 19 (new): A bath agent containing the fermented plant extract according to claim 12.

Claim 20 (new): A pharmaceutical containing the fermented plant extract powder according to claim 13.

Claim 21 (new): A food containing the fermented plant extract powder according to claim 13.

Claim 22 (new): A bath agent containing the fermented plant extract powder according to claim 13.

Claim 23 (new): The method for fermentation and culture according to claim 1 wherein said facultative anaerobic gram-negative bacterium is bacillus belonging to the genus *Pantoea* and said edible plant is selected from a food grain, a seaweed or a bean, and a mixture thereof.

Claim 24 (new): The method for fermentation and culture according to claim 23 wherein said edible plant is a food grain and said material derived from said food grain is selected from wheat flour, rice powder, wheat bran powder, rice bran and sake lees.

Claim 25 (new): The method for fermentation and culture according to claim 23 wherein said edible plant is seaweed and said material derived from said seaweed is selected from brown seaweed powder, mekabu powder and kelp powder.

Claim 26 (new): A fermented plant extract obtained by the method for fermentation and culture according to claim 23.

Claim 27 (new): Fermented plant extract powder obtained from the fermented plant extract according to claim 26.

Claim 28 (new): A composition containing the fermented plant extract according to claim 26.

Claim 29 (new): A composition containing the fermented plant extract powder according to claim 27.

Claim 30 (new): The method for fermentation and culture according to claim 1 wherein said facultative anaerobic gram-negative bacterium is *Pantoea agglomerans* and said edible plant is selected from a food grain, a seaweed or a bean, and a mixture thereof.

Claim 31 (new): The method for fermentation and culture according to claim 30 wherein said edible plant is a food grain and said material derived from said food grain is selected from wheat flour, rice powder, wheat bran powder, rice bran and sake lees.

Claim 32 (new): The method for fermentation and culture according to claim 30 wherein said edible plant is seaweed and said material derived from said seaweed is selected from brown seaweed powder, mekabu powder and kelp powder.

Claim 33 (new): A fermented plant extract obtained by the method for fermentation and culture according to claim 30.

Claim 34 (new): Fermented plant extract powder obtained from the fermented plant extract according to claim 33.

Claim 35 (new): A composition comprising the fermented plant extract according to claim 33.

Claim 36 (new): A composition comprising the fermented plant extract powder according to claim 34.

Claim 37 (new): A composition containing the fermented plant extract according to claim 12.

Claim 38 (new): A composition containing the fermented plant extract powder according to claim 13.